Tourism Saskatchewan

Plan for 2018-19

saskatchewan.ca

Government of Saskatchewan

Table of Contents

Statement from the Minister 1

Response to Government Direction 2

Operational Plan 3

Highlights 9

Financial Summary 10

Statement from the Minister

The Honourable Gene Makowsky

Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

I am pleased to present Tourism Saskatchewan's Operational Plan for 2018-19.

Government Direction and Budget for 2018-19 is focused on keeping Saskatchewan On Track by controlling spending, delivering high quality services for Saskatchewan people, keeping our economy strong, and returning to balance in 2019-20.

Tourism Saskatchewan's mandate guides work to promote travel to Saskatchewan, increase visitor spending, build a robust tourism workforce, and develop quality tourism products and services.

Our wealth of tourism resources and a vibrant industry bring positive profile to Saskatchewan, and make our province a great place to live, work and visit.

Tourism contributes significantly to Saskatchewan's economy. In 2016, travel expenditures reached $2.19 billion and almost 12.5 million visits were made to and within the province. More than 67,000 Saskatchewan people are employed in tourism or tourism-related jobs. Communities, large and small, urban and rural, play a part in tourism. Throughout Saskatchewan, there are 3,200 businesses and operators offering over 4,000 tourism products and services.

As a four-season destination, Saskatchewan offers great diversity in travel experiences. We clearly have what so many travellers are seeking. Through research, Tourism Saskatchewan knows its key markets, understands consumer trends and distinguishes how and where to promote Saskatchewan for the highest, most efficient return. The continued implementation of a sweeping Content Strategy, enhancements to Tourism Saskatchewan's consumer website, and better utilization of social media to channel compelling stories and content to potential visitors will further enhance the province's reputation as a must-see destination.

The completion of a Product Development Strategy in 2018-2019 will determine a vision for tourism growth and deliver a "roadmap" for the development of tourism products and experiences that meet the needs of travellers and adapt to market trends.

Saskatchewan's strength and competitiveness as a destination hinges on a skilled, service-driven workforce. Tourism Saskatchewan champions a "culture of quality" through a comprehensive tourism human resource strategy that provides successful, reputable training and education to benefit employers, employees and visitors.

In its commitment to key strategies, as outlined on the following pages, Tourism Saskatchewan upholds a mission to "connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations."

Tourism Saskatchewan will report on plan achievements, within the financial parameters provided, in its 2018-19 Annual Report.

The Honourable Gene Makowsky
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Response to Government Direction

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to keeping the province On Track through prudent fiscal management. We will succeed by spending wisely, supporting economic growth, and ensuring services are sustainable.

This focus will continue to advance Government toward the realization of Saskatchewan's Vision and goals.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

- **Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people**
- **Meeting the challenges of growth**
- **Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people**
- **Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Saskatchewan's Vision and goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and partners to align their programs and services and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's residents.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2018-19 annual reports.

Operational Plan

Mandate Statement

Tourism Saskatchewan promotes the province as a tourism destination by providing in-province and out-of-province marketing and visitor services. Tourism Saskatchewan assists industry to market and develop quality tourism products through co-operative marketing, education and training, and event funding programs.

Vision Statement

A vibrant entrepreneurial tourism industry offering year-round compelling and memorable Saskatchewan experiences.

Mission Statement

Connect people with quality Saskatchewan experiences and advance the development of successful tourism operations.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people
Meeting the challenges of growth
Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people
Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority: Market Saskatchewan's tourism experiences and stories

Tourism Saskatchewan Goal

Increase economic benefits to the province through targeted investment in tourism marketing

Strategy

Strengthen the province's reputation as a destination through compelling, branded marketing initiatives

Key Actions

- Transition to consumer-focused, always on content marketing as the primary driver to motivate key market segments
- Transition from awareness-based advertising campaigns to influence-driven marketing
- Invest in ongoing changes to the consumer website to ensure delivery of consumer-focused, always on marketing

Performance Measures

Economic indicators

The Saskatchewan tourism industry monitors measures related to general economic performance through a variety of sources. A key target for economic success is to increase total expenditures by travellers in Saskatchewan to $2.8 billion by 2020.

Advertisement reach and target market success

Key target market engagement will be measured through:

- Increasing consumer interaction time with Tourism Saskatchewan content by 10 per cent by 2020
- Ensuring that all co-operative marketing applications receiving funding achieve a minimum score of 80 per cent, based on factors such as strategic fit and brand compliance
- Increasing angling licence sales to U.S. visitors by 50 per cent overall (from 10,352 to 15,500) and by 100 per cent from select key targeted markets by 2020

Strategy

Apply research and evaluation tools to refine and adapt marketing tactics to better target potential visitors and increase expenditures

Key Actions

- Utilize research and analysis to prioritize market segments and budget allocations for the following year to best utilize resources
- Invest in ongoing analysis of Saskatchewan's markets to continuously adjust marketing techniques and outcomes

Performance Measures

Recall of Advertising

Tourism Saskatchewan will determine the success of marketing tactics by identifying the percentage of people surveyed who recall seeing Tourism Saskatchewan advertisements. Tourism Saskatchewan is developing new indicators specific to prioritized key market segments in 2018.

Strategy

Create and deliver consumer-focused content that inspires and informs travellers from key markets to visit Saskatchewan

Key Actions

- Conduct an annual review of digital infrastructure to ensure that marketing is consumer-focused, always-on and digital-first
- Create, curate and distribute content to specific market segments across all forms of media

Performance Measures

Social Media reach

Tourism Saskatchewan will determine the success of social media reach through measuring the increase in social media followers. The target is to increase the following by 25 per cent per year, to 364,000 followers in 2020, and increase the average social media engagement rate to five per cent from an average of three per cent by 2020.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people | **Meeting the challenges of growth** | Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people | Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority: Strengthen Saskatchewan's Tourism Experiences

Tourism Saskatchewan Goal

Increase the number and quality of Saskatchewan tourism experiences and products to meet traveller expectations

Strategy

Assist operators and stakeholders in market-readiness and experience development

Key Actions

- Undertake a Product Development Strategy to identify key growth opportunities and the most effective use of Tourism Saskatchewan resources in assisting industry to better develop consumer-focused experiences for increased profitability
- Implement key recommendations of the Product Development Strategy
- Work with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada on an approach to develop market-ready Indigenous tourism products

Performance Measures

Product Development Strategy implementation

The Product Development Strategy is being developed and implemented in 2018-19. Implementation of recommended actions from this strategy that have been started by March 31, 2019, will be an initial indicator of success.

Strategy

Build a strong tourism workforce

Key Actions

- Implement key initiatives of the Tourism Human Resource Strategy with industry and annually update the action plan to assist tourism operators with recruitment, retention and training of key tourism personnel in order to assure delivery of quality tourism experiences
- Develop and deliver training programs that support knowledge and skill development of those employed in tourism/hospitality
- Work with tourism/hospitality businesses to implement effective retention strategies through programming such as Employer of Choice, Tourism Apprenticeships and national certifications

Performance Measures

Number of training participants and employability success

Tourism Saskatchewan will measure the number of people trained through Tourism Saskatchewan's education and training programs with the goal of having 7,000 participants annually. Additionally, Tourism Saskatchewan will measure the number of individuals employed in a tourism-related profession with the goal of 68,000 by 2020.

Strategy

Enhance Saskatchewan's reputation as an event-hosting destination

Key Actions

- Continue support through the Event Hosting Program that enhances Saskatchewan's reputation as a host destination and contributes to visitor growth
- Work with events and stakeholders to improve tracking, evaluation and reporting to help grow and enhance the tourism component of events

Performance Measures

Event hosting

Tourism Saskatchewan will measure Event Hosting success through the amount of funding support provided and the number of events supported. All supported events will meet program standards for post-event evaluation metrics.

Strategy

Champion a culture of quality

Key Actions

- Tourism Saskatchewan will build industry capacity to deliver quality service through programs such as: Employer of Choice, ServiceFirst, Reputation Management and select experiential training

Performance Measures

Quality improvement indicators

By December 2018, Tourism Saskatchewan will develop a benchmark for consumer ratings of Saskatchewan operators to measure the effectiveness of Tourism Saskatchewan programs in improving quality.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority: Improve Destination Competitiveness

Tourism Saskatchewan Goal

Engage Stakeholders

Strategy

Deliver relevant information, programs and services based on research, trends and tourism industry needs

Key Actions

- Engage with stakeholders to solicit input on the Product Development Strategy
- Ensure funding program criteria align with the Tourism Saskatchewan identified market segments and stakeholder goals
- Support operator engagement in areas such as online reputation management, social media and website development

Performance Measures

Increases in stakeholder engagement

Ensure that a minimum of 50 per cent of invited stakeholders provide input into the Product Development Strategy. Increase industry participation in Tourism Saskatchewan led programs by 10 per cent over 2017-18 levels.

Strategy

Cultivate effective partnerships with key tourism industry stakeholders

Key Actions

- Develop and deliver an event workshop series to enhance key experiences
- Host industry engagement events

Performance Measures

Strengthening of stakeholder partnerships

Increase the number of industry representatives participating in Tourism Saskatchewan hosted events by 15 per cent over 2017-18 levels.

Strategy

Work with stakeholders and government partners to ensure an environment conducive to tourism growth

Key Actions

- Work with destination areas (DMOs), city marketing organizations (CMOs) and other industry associations and groups, to ensure that tourism businesses are supported in a coordinated and cohesive manner

Performance Measures

Strengthening Organizational Partnerships

Host a minimum of two CMO/DMO strategy sessions per year.

Government Goals

Sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people

Meeting the challenges of growth

Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people

Delivering responsive and responsible government

Strategic priority: Nurture an internal culture focused on excellence

Tourism Saskatchewan Goal

Ensure use of strategic, evidence-based tools and technologies to support business decisions and improve innovation; recruit and retain a committed and engaged workforce

Strategy

Foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation based on a one-team approach

Cultivate a values-driven work environment that inspires and empowers employees

Optimize internal information sharing practices to enhance employee knowledge

Invest in research and evaluation which appropriately guides change and innovation

Invest in technologies which support delivery of effective programs and services

Key Actions

- Implement recommended actions developed by the organization's Continuous Improvements teams working on industry-facing and consumer-facing programs and services
- Develop and implement key indicator dashboards for each program area
- Leverage existing communication tools such as SharePoint and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to improve information sharing across the organization

Performance Measures

Indicators of a Culture of Excellence

By March 2019, successfully implement a minimum of three employee generated improvements, develop key indicator dashboards, and increase the employee engagement survey innovation score from 76 to 79.

Highlights

Tourism Saskatchewan plans for expenditures of $15.7 million in 2018-19. This budget allows Tourism Saskatchewan to continue to fulfil its mandate to promote the province as a tourism destination by providing in-province and out-of-province marketing and visitor services, and to assists industry to market and develop quality tourism products through co-operative marketing, education and training, and event funding programs.

Content Strategy

Tourism Saskatchewan's primary goal is to increase economic benefit to the province through marketing and developing Saskatchewan tourism experiences. Marketing activities are largely driven by a recently developed content strategy that targets markets with the greatest interest in the types of experiences that Saskatchewan offers. The content strategy outlines how and what is communicated to potential visitors and is based on the following principles:

- Consumer-focused;
- Digital-first; and
- Always-on, innovative brand journalism (year-round rather than campaign based).

The strategy focuses the majority of efforts and marketing budget online through social media, paid advertising and working with travel influencers.

Product Development Strategy

In addition to the content strategy, Tourism Saskatchewan is completing and implementing a Product Development Strategy that provides empirical, evidence-based recommendations for tourism product development. The strategy offers the supply-side perspective and a product/market match that helps Tourism Saskatchewan to influence the industry to bring to market the experiences that visitors are seeking. More specifically, the strategy will:

- Project future growth potential of tourism in the province; and
- Identify the tourism products and experiences needed to respond to tourism trends and meet demand.

The 2018-19 budget and operational highlights include:

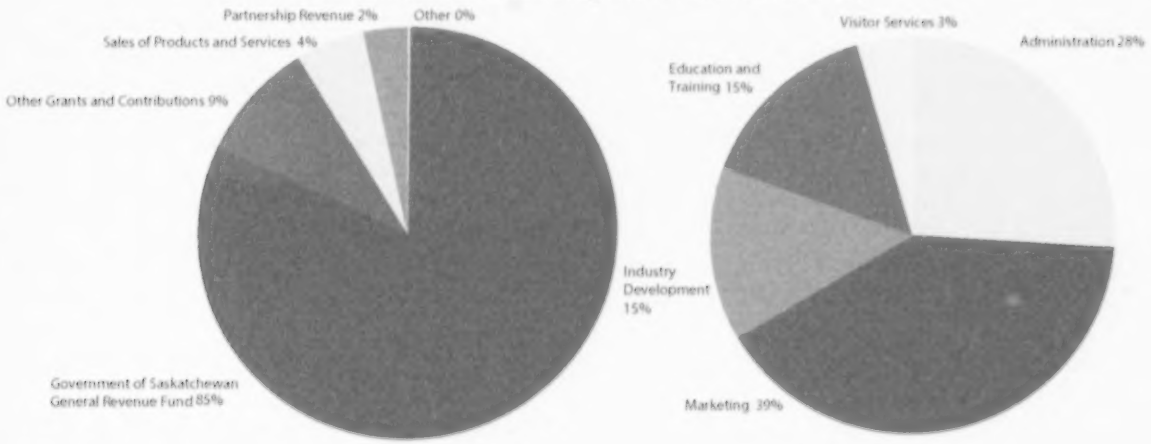
- Focusing the majority of efforts and marketing budget online through social media, paid advertising and working with travel influencers to reach a highly targeted audience interested in Saskatchewan experiences, this will include a complete refresh of the tourism consumer website to ensure that it provides consumers with timely information in the format and manner they desire;
- Undertaking and implementing a Product Development Strategy that identifies key growth opportunities and most effective use of resources in assisting industry development;
- Assisting in advancing the effectiveness of staff retention strategies for tourism and hospitality businesses;
- Continuing support for building industry capacity for delivery of a variety of services and programs;
- Continuing to offer consumers personalized service through activities such as provision of visitor services, select marketplace activity, working with carefully selected travel trade in key international markets and providing marketing support to operators and organizations to reach nearby markets in the most effective manner;
- Working with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada to develop market-ready indigenous tourism products;
- Continuing to support events that qualify through the Event Hosting Program; and
- Adapting and enhancing education and training offerings, in-person and online, to mitigate industry need.

Financial Summary

2018-19 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Appropriation	13,101
Revenue:	
Government of Saskatchewan General Revenue Fund	13,101
Other Grants and Contributions	1,446
Sales of Products and Services	536
Partnership Revenue	271
Other	**67**
Total Revenue	**15,421**
Expenses:	
Administration	4,313
Marketing	6,162
Industry Development	2,345
Education and Training	2,407
Visitor Services	**494**
Total Expenses	**15,721**
Budgeted Deficit	**(300)**

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget

Tourism Saskatchewan Budgeted Revenue for 2018-19:



For More Information

Please visit Tourism Saskatchewan's website at http://www.tourismsaskatchewan.com